



Photo by Todd Berenger

Bryan Blevins, foreground, and Maj. Rudy Cdebaca, installation voting officers, review the handbook as they launch efforts to register TEAM KIRTLAND to vote. The voting officers and their team of unit representatives hope to reach every member on the installation who needs assistance registering to vote.

Team of voting reps ready to assist with registration

BY JENNIFER E. WEST

Nucleus staff writer

A team of people trained to assist TEAM KIRTLAND in registering to vote is willing and ready to help.

Leading the Federal Voting Assistance Program team are voting officers Bryan Blevins and Maj. Rudy Cdebaca.

"The purpose of the Federal Voting Assistance Program is to help them register to vote absentee or request a ballot," Mr. Blevins said.

For military people and their dependents, the simple act of casting a vote isn't always that simple. To bridge the information gap frequently faced by servicemembers and their families, DOD implemented a tiered strategy to educate and inform their people about getting their votes counted.

Because states have different requirements for voter registration, the simple act of being eligible to vote can become a confusing task for the transient lifestyle of the military and federal service. And, that's when the voting representative team can assist.

Mr. Blevins said the mission of the two project officers and their registration team is to reach and assist everyone on the base—active duty, civilian and contractor—to educate on what needs to be done to vote and to encourage them to make their votes count.

"Many people have not exercised this right and privilege (of voting) in the past because they probably thought that their vote did not make a difference," Major Cdebaca noted. "As we saw in the last presidential elections, every vote mattered. Voting is one of

the most important rights we have as Americans, so we urge you to enjoy one of the rights we fought to protect."

The legal office and voting project officers work closely in cases concerning a voter's legal residence.

If you need registration assistance, contact your unit voting representative. If you are unable to contact the representative, call a dedicated telephone line at 853-2223 for assistance.

More unit voting assistance counselors are being assigned. If you don't find your unit represented, call 853-2223.

377th Services Squadron

2nd Lt. Ryan Thompson

377th Comptroller Squadron

Master Sgt. Deidra Sanders,

Airman 1st Class Alish Ogle

512th Rescue Squadron

Chris Seber,

Staff Sgt. Jerrod Sunderland

Air Force Inspection Agency

Master Sgt. Carrie Farrin,

Staff Sgt. Cecilia Sanchez

377th Mission Support Squadron

Master Sgt. Ray Nivens

Space and Missile Center, Det. 12

1st Lt. Adam Schmidt,

Staff Sgt. Robert Young

377th Logistics Readiness Squadron

1st Lt. Willie Cox

377th Aerospace Medicine Squadron

Tomas Mata,

Senior Airman Monica Conkle

377th Maintenance Group

Genie Smith

Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center

Capt. Dan McCann,

1st Lt. Mike Cook

Medical Operations Squadron

Capt. Gabe Holguin

377th Medical Group

Johnny Beasley

58th Operations Support Squadron

Maj. Michael Klinkman



Missile Defense Agency opens Kirtland AFB facility

Maj. Gen. Henry A. "Trey" Obering, Missile Defense Agency deputy director, left, and Col. Ellen Pawlikowski, Airborne Laser System Program Office director, pull cords that unveil a sign for a renovated building, near Hardin Field, that serves as the program office. General Obering officiated the Feb. 5 ceremony for the newly renovated 28,000-square-foot, two-story building with offices for nearly 200 people and serves as the headquarters for the Missile Defense Agency's \$2.1 billion Airborne Laser program. The organization is developing the nation's first laser-armed combat aircraft designed to destroy attacking ballistic missiles during their early stages of flight.

Photo by Eva Hendren

Enduring Love

Plan a marriage, not just a ceremony

BY CHAP., MAJ., MARK S. HOBBS

Kirtland AFB Chapel

Everything changed when she walked in. Her bright red lips created a smile that was unforgettable. Beautiful long blonde hair covered her shoulders.

"I want to get married tomorrow, will you be able to marry me? It's Valentine's Day, you know."

Of course I knew tomorrow was Valentine's Day. She was the fifth person to come into our office since lunch, requesting a chaplain perform a marriage ceremony the next afternoon.

"I would like to help you, but I cannot perform your ceremony tomorrow."

Her lips begin to quiver. Tears streamed down her face.

"But, I have to get married tomorrow. It would be so romantic to get married on Valentine's Day. It is a day

of love," she cried.

I felt like Dragnet's Joe Friday. I could see the disappointment on her face and hear her as she cried.

"We've been seeing each other for a couple of months and we decided last night that we should get married on Valentine's Day."

I was elated they were in love, but I could not forget the faces of other young brides who had visited my office. Their eyes were swollen and red from the rivers of tears that flowed down their cheeks. Their lips were not bright red; they quivered as they told the story.

"He does not love me any more."

"He left me for another woman."

"I thought I knew him, I realize now I never knew him."

"I did not know I could hurt this

badly."

Nearly all these stories of hurt and disappointment shared common themes.

Two people had fallen into what they thought was love. They fed their love with whatever they could. Usually they married quickly without much preparation nor thought for the long haul. They were convinced love would see them through. Love is the glue that tends to hold life together. But, glue gets old and gives way.

Love is that way too. It must be renewed and nurtured. Left unattended, love will die like a once blazing campfire forgotten when everyone goes to sleep for the night.

To enable a relationship to endure the strain of time, a couple must prepare for marriage. No fighter pilot would attempt to wage war without proper training, yet most marriage partners jump into a marriage with the seat of their pants totally removed.

They choose not to learn how to improve communication skills. They are afraid to discuss issues of sexuality and religion. Some partners say nothing about money, until it's all gone

or their house is full of things the other partner purchased.

Valentine's Day 2004 is tomorrow. May it serve as a time for each of us interested in love to reflect upon "our situation." If you are planning to marry, do not fail to prepare for marriage. Do more than plan the ceremony. Dream of the kind of relationship you desire three years from now.

Get some books about relationships from the library or bookstore and read them. You and your mate should discuss these materials. Attend classes that teach people marriage skills. If you are already married, seek ways to improve your skills of communication, lovemaking and commitment.

Most religion organizations offer such courses; the base helping agencies offer seminars too. Training for marriage is ongoing. Don't lose the love of your life because you are too stubborn or proud or confused to seek help when you realize your marriage is in trouble.

"I want to get married tomorrow, will you be able to marry me? It's Valentine's Day, you know?"